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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7956  
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RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY  
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RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY  
RHMMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 3374  
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RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 2317  
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 4101  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 7030  
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 6114  
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TAGS: OIIP KMDR KPAO JA

SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - UNREST IN BURMA

LEAD STORIES: Most national dailies front-paged the results of their respective opinion polls pointing to high public support for the Fukuda administration.

¶1. "Burmese Junta in Stalemate" The business-oriented Nikkei editorialized (9/27): "Massive rallies have been taking place day after day in Burma to protest the junta's oppressive rule. Given the military regime's strict control, the demonstrations are a bold act. The junta's rule has continued for more than 40 years, and it is high time to end it, as it has become apparent that the Burmese people have lost confidence in the regime.... China can wield enormous influence over Burma. China appears to have been asking the Burmese government to exercise restraint in dealing with the protests in view of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Now is the time for China to exercise its clout more clearly, as Beijing bears a heavy responsibility. Burma is also a member of ASEAN, which is supposedly striving to build a community. What kind of community is ASEAN attempting to establish while it turns a blind eye to the authoritarian regime in Burma? "

¶2. "Foreign Countries Should Step in to Prevent Bloodshed" The liberal Asahi argued (9/27): "The use of force against peaceful protestors must not be tolerated. The military junta led by Gen. Than Shwe should begin dialogue with monks and citizen representatives immediately.... Beijing bears a heavy responsibility for the situation in Burma, as it is currently constructing a pipeline through Burma that will connect China with the Indian Ocean.... As the Burmese economy relies heavily on Chinese investment,

Beijing is in a position of great influence.... Leaders and foreign ministers from many countries happen to be in New York for a meeting of the UN General Assembly. UN Secretary General Ban should assemble the foreign ministers of China, India, and ASEAN members and have them call on Burma to exercise restraint."

SCHIEFFER